Oakwood School

"Working Together"

Careers Education and Guidance Policy (CAEIAG) and Provider Access Policy

December 2025

Careers Education and Guidance Policy including Provider Access Policy

What is meant by Careers?
The term 'Career' is used to explain the pathway that a young person takes as they mature. It relates to education, training, possible employment where appropriate and life experiences beyond school. As explained in the **Gatsby Benchmarks SEND Guidance**, all activities that shape or prepare young pupils for their future are considered to be career related. All **Preparation for Adulthood (PfA**) activities are therefore considered to be part of the careers programme provide by our school.

Rationale and Introduction

Careers education, information, advice and guidance (CIEIAG) is an integral part of the support we offer our pupils at Oakwood School. Effective and appropriate careers support can help to prepare our young pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. It can help guide both themselves and their families to make decisions and manage transitions as learners and even workers. As options for our young pupils can be more varied and complex, it is vital we support them to making suitable and appropriate choices for their future, as well as develop the skills and awareness of their vital changes. As a result, our careers programme has a whole school remit designed to complement our school curriculum as well as Preparing for Adulthood.

At Oakwood School we believe that Preparation for Adulthood begins through exploration, investigation and the development of focus and attention. With this in mind, we introduce our pupils, from EYFS onwards, to a range of activities designed to stimulate intrigue and interest into the world of the wider world and work and develop the communication skills, confidence, resilience and problem-solving skills needed to be successful. This builds to incorporate a wide-ranging careers programme to guide our pupils through their own choices in life, as well as their families wishes for their future.

Values and Vision

At Oakwood School we are committed to implementing a careers programme that:

- Encourage pupils to be ambitious, broaden their horizons and explore their own careers aspirations throughout their life at school.
- To ensure our pupils readiness to take their next steps in their learning, careers or future adult life.
- Experience a broad and balanced curriculum specifically tailored to meet their individual needs as identified as part of the 'Preparing for Adulthood' programme and detailed in their Educational Health Care Plan. The curriculum seeks to draw out the capabilities and talents of our young pupils and encourage them to pursue their ambitions.
- Have opportunities to visit different environments in the wider community and meet employees and employers through regularly and routine curriculum activities which including working in different roles around school, careers fayres, visiting speakers and link this to their everyday learning.
- Where appropriate and meets the needs of the pupils regular work placements / work encounters may be arranged.

- Without bias, pupils will have opportunities to explore and experience a wide variety of career pathways.

Statutory Requirements and Expectations

As stated in the 2002 Education Act Oakwood School are committed to provide a balance and broadly based curriculum which promotes:

a) The spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and
b) Prepare pupils at school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences for later life.

Specialist Advice from Careers Lead

Our pupils and families will receive regular carefully tailored and adapted input and support from our school based careers advisor, Rachel Maybank, from Year 7 to Year 11. Rachel Maybank has specialised experience in SEND and is fully qualified to give unbiased and individual and appropriately career guidance. Rachel will attend yearly Annual Review meetings from Year 7 to provide suitable careers guidance to parents, as well as engage in '**My Future**' individual sessions and PfA and careers events and educational visits.

Quality in Careers Standards and Careers and Enterprise Company – Compass +

The DfE guidance strongly recommends that schools should aim to achieve accreditation under the Quality of Careers Standard. On a termly basis we work with Jo Rasmin from Walsall Authority to complete our termly Careers and Enterprise audit against the Gatsby Benchmarks. Following the audit this sets a clear action plan to ensure continuous improvement of our careers program, this information can be location on our 'careers website page'. On a yearly basis we actively engage in the 'Careers Impact System – Peer to Peer Review' to share high quality practice and set clear future goals, whilst networking with other colleagues from similar settings.

Gatsby Benchmarking

Oakwood School follows the principles of the Gatsby Benchmarks and where required will adapt these principles to meet the needs of our individual pupils.

The 8 Gatsby Benchmarks are:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from careers and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each pupil
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance

The aims for the careers programme are as follows:

- To help pupils to understanding the changing world of work and future learning
- To facilitate meaningful encounters with employers and professionals in the wider world for all our pupils.

- Supporting positive transitions to post 16 settings.
- To support our pupils in experiencing, exploring and finding out about opportunities for future.
- To help support pupils to develop skills and qualities to make a successful transition into the wide world including possible work experiences where appropriate.
- Encourage and promote participation in continued learning and experiences through carefully planned curriculum pathways.
- Support inclusion, challenge stereotyping and promoting equality of opportunity.
- Contributing to strategies for raising achievement, particularly by increasing motivation.

Careers and Labour Market Information

Careers and labour market information is available through relevant displays and our school website for both parents and pupils where relevant.

Learners Entitlement

All pupils at Oakwood School are entitled to be fully involved in an effective and appropriately adapted CEIAG programme that is carefully tailored by experience careers lead and advisor.

Where appropriate pupils are encouraged to take an active role in their careers development, so the careers program emphasises and focuses on individual self-development, learning and life experience that will prepare them for adulthood and life beyond school.

During their time in school all pupils can expect:

- Support to develop the self-awareness and 'Preparing for Adulthood' skills needed for their future
- The support they need to make choices for Key Stage 4 alongside the support of their parents.
- Careers / My Future / Preparing for Adulthood dedicated sessions from Year 7 to Year 11 covering options after school, the world of work and the skills needed for their future.
- To experience meaningful encounters with a representative from the world of work and life styles each school year, this could be through assemblies, careers talks, projects, visits in the community and activity sessions etc.
- The opportunity to relate what they learn and experience to real life experiences in preparation for life beyond school.
- Access to carefully tailored guidance with a trained, careers advisor specialised in SEND provision within all secondary year groups.
- We will keep parents and careers informed progress and provide parents/careers with information to support students careers planning and decision making. Parents/ careers will play an active role in yearly annual reviews with a key focus on 'Preparing for Adulthood'.

Parent/Family Involvement

At Oakwood we encourage parents to play an integral role in supporting their child in making appropriate decisions for their future. Our school is keen to foster parental/family involvement in the careers programme wherever possible.

Events for Parents/Carers/Families
Parents/carers/families have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress and share their vision and decision making for future pathways during yearly annual review meetings. Parents are kept up to date with career / My Future related events and activities via letters and information shared on our careers page on our school website. They are also welcome top make contact with the Careers Team at Oakwood, should they have any questions or concerns.

Delivery and Management
The content of the careers education programme that is delivered to all our pupils at Oakwood can be found in the linked documents below:

Careers at Oakwood

Preparing for Adulthood

Role and Responsibilities of Staff and Stakeholders
The Careers Leadership Team (Ruth Richardson and Kelvin Stephens) is responsible for taking a strategic lead and direction for careers work in the Oakwood, working under the direction of the Secondary Head of School with responsibility for careers and employability (Ruth Richardson).

A broad range of staff support careers activities and careers learning at school including Secondary Class Teachers, Middle Leaders across all areas of the curriculum subjects and pathways. Our assessment lead and careers advisor takes a key role in supporting and assessing the impact of careers related activities and events, as well as the moderation of accreditations.

At Oakwood School we have a key linked governor – Janet Catto who will oversee the implementation of the CAEIG policy. The Careers Leads will report termly to the Governing Body to report specific career related events that have occurred throughout the term, how the curriculum is delivering CAEIG to all students at an appropriate level, key focuses tor forthcoming term to ensure continuous improvement.

Staff Deployment
Secondary class teachers and support staff and subject leaders are introduced to the concepts, aims and programme for CEIAG at Oakwood during regular focused teachers meetings. The Careers Leads attend conferences, events and careers network meetings through 'The Careers and Enterprise Company' to keep up to date with best practice, legislation and also support the development of SEND Practice.

Employer Encounters and Community Links

Links with employers, businesses and other external agencies continue to grow through our weekly community visits / experience, building local community and alumni connections.

Resources
Oakwood is committed to providing the resources to enable an effective careers programme, including adequate staffing, staffing training and resources.

Evaluation of the CAEIAG Programme

CAEIAG is developing as our secondary provision grows at Oakwood School and is reviewed annually as part of the whole school monitoring routine. In addition to this we follow the support and guidance from 'The Careers and Enterprise Compass +' to evaluate our current provision by completing an evaluation audit and form an action plan for the coming term. These audits are completed on a termly basis with the support of an allocated careers advisor. The findings from all parties contribute to our whole school development plan and shared with termly with the Governing Body.

References

The Gatsby Benchmarks
Implementing the Gatsby benchmarks (goodcareerguidance.org.uk)

The Careers Development Institute Careers Framework
CDI Framework - Career Development Institute (thecdi.net)

Date written: December 2025
Date of Next Review: December 2026
Written by: Ruth Richardson

Provider Access Policy

(To include The Department of Education, July 2021: "Baker Clause" and the Provider Access Legislation, January 2023)

Rationale

High quality careers education and guidance in school or college is critical to young people's futures. It helps to prepare them for the workplace by providing a clear understanding of the world of work including the routes to jobs and careers that they might find engaging and rewarding. It supports them to acquire the self-development and career management skills they need to achieve positive employment destinations. This helps students to choose their pathways, improve their life opportunities and contribute to a productive and successful economy.

As the number of apprenticeships rises every year, it becomes increasingly important that all young people have a full understanding of all the options available to them post-16 and post-18 including wider technical education options such as T-Levels and Higher Technical Qualifications.

Commitment

Oakwood School is committed to ensuring there is an opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access students, for the purpose of informing them about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. Oakwood School is fully aware of the responsibility to set students on the path that will secure the best outcome which will enable them to progress in education and work and give employers the highly skilled people they need. That means acting impartially, in line with the statutory duty, and not showing bias towards any route, be that academic or technical.

Oakwood School endeavours to ensure that all students are aware of all routes to higher skills and are able to access information on technical options and apprenticeships (The Department of Education, July 2021: "Baker Clause": supporting students to understand the full range of education and training options, and the Provider Access Legislation, January 2023).

Aims

Oakwood School's policy for Access to other education and training providers has the following aims:

To develop the knowledge and awareness of our students of all career pathways available to them, including technical qualifications and apprenticeships.

To support young people to be able to learn more about opportunities for education and training outside of school before making crucial choices about their future options.

To reduce drop out from courses and avoid the risk of students becoming NEET (Young people not in education, employment or training).

Student Entitlement
Oakwood School fully supports the statutory requirement for students to have direct access to other providers of further education training, technical training and apprenticeships. The school will comply with the new legal requirement to put on at least six encounters with providers of approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships. This will be done in community engagements, Careers Discussions, assemblies in National Apprenticeship Week and National Careers Week, in addition to providers attending careers events at school.

Development
This policy has been developed and is reviewed annually by the Careers Team based on current good practice guidelines by the Department for Education.
Rachel Maybank – Careers Advisor
Ruth Richardson – Career Lead and Secondary Head of School
Kate Bargh – Executive Head Teacher

Links with other policies
It supports and is underpinned by key school policies including those for Careers, Child Protection, Equality and Diversity, and SEND.

Equality and Diversity
Access to other providers is available and promoted to allow all students to access information about other providers of further education and apprenticeships. Oakwood School is committed to encouraging all students to make decisions about their future based on impartial information.

Requests for access
Requests for access should be directed to Ruth Richardson Careers Leaders. ***Ruth Richardson*** may be contacted by telephone or email, ***postbox@OAK.merciantrust.org.uk*** Tel ***01543 452040.***

Grounds for granting requests for access
Access will be given for providers to attend during school assemblies, timetabled Careers or Life lessons, and Careers or Raising Aspirations events that Oakwood School is arranging. Students may also travel to visit another provider as part of the trip to be organised in partnership with ***Oakwood School – North Star Federation.***

Details of premises or facilities to be provided to a person who is given access
Oakwood School will provide an appropriate room or assembly hall to be agreed. All rooms have computers, projectors and screens provided. The Careers Leaders or Careers Adviser will organise this, working closely with the provider to ensure the facilities are appropriate to the audience. Appropriate safeguarding checks will be carried out. Providers will be met and supervised by a member of the Careers Team who will facilitate.

Live/Virtual encounters
Oakwood School will consider appropriate live online encounters with providers where requested, and these may be broadcast into classrooms or the school assembly hall. Technology checks in advance will be required to ensure compatibility of systems.

Parents and Carers
Parental involvement is encouraged, and parents may be invited to attend the events to meet the providers.

Management
The Careers Leader coordinates all provider requests and is responsible to his/her senior management line manager.

Complaints Procedure
Any complaints about this policy should be raised to Kate Bargh Executive Head Teacher at Oakwood School by email: postbox@OAK.merciantrust.org.uk *or telephone: 01543 452040*

Monitoring review and evaluation
The Policy is monitored and evaluated annually via the Senior Leadership Team.

Policy review due: December 2026